



GROWING TOGETHER: COMPELLENT'S FIRST CUSTOMER, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



The Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business consistently ranks among the top business schools in the nation. To continue this tradition of excellence among tough competition, the Columbus-based college faculty and staff work hard to ensure that students have access to the most modern educational tools and facilities.

Staying at the head of the class also means providing students with leading technologies to improve their educational experience. The college features a state-of-the-art computer network, satellite uplink capabilities, video-on-demand and nearly 5,000 computer ports. Fisher provides every student, faculty and staff member their own dedicated electronic work space to store research, coursework, e-mail and personal documents.

Nearly five years ago, Fisher's forward-thinking IT department turned to the then newly launched Compellent SAN to provide the foundation for the college's IT infrastructure. The department selected Compellent for its ability to provide an affordable, redundant, scalable and secure enterprise storage solution to support its 300-plus faculty and staff members and more than 4,500 students. Since that initial installation, Compellent's flexibility has allowed the school to support rapid data growth and technology demands without ripping and replacing their SAN once the school's storage needs reach a certain threshold.

DYNAMIC CAPACITY PROVIDES AFFORDABLE SCALABILITY

One of the initial reasons Fisher turned to Compellent was to provide an affordable, scalable solution that would meet the school's storage needs now and in the future. Before turning to Compellent, the IT staff had logged long hours sizing volumes and managing disk space. There was a real need for an easier, more long-term solution.

Today, the need for scalability is still strong at Fisher. The proliferation of more-advanced technologies on campus has only increased demands on storage. "We're doubling our storage space about every two years," says Brian Wilson, director-technology at The Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business. "Compellent has made expansion more affordable and less painful."

Compellent has made expansion easier because the SAN can grow from one to hundreds of terabytes on a single platform. The SAN Fisher purchased years ago has scaled capacity, connectivity and performance incrementally as the college's needs change, rather than forcing Wilson and his team to make a best-guess estimate of their long-term storage needs.



"Compellent provides unlimited expansion to keep pace with our rapidly changing technology needs and the resulting storage growth."

BRIAN WILSON
Director-Technology
The Ohio State University's
Fisher College of Business

RESULTS REPORTED BY THE OSU'S FISHER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

- » Data Instant Replay™ reduces restore time from days to minutes
- » Simplified storage management allows IT team to focus on more critical issues
- » Simple, modular scalability helps OSU keep up with the latest educational tools
- » Robust, reliable platform protects student and research data
- » Storage virtualization provides foundation for planned server virtualization

OPERATING SYSTEMS

- » Mac OSX
- » Microsoft Windows
- » Microsoft Advanced Server
- » Linux
- » Sun Solaris

KEY APPLICATIONS

- » Microsoft Exchange
- » Microsoft SQL Server
- » Maximizer CRM
- » Web server
- » File/Print servers
- » Financial/behavior simulators
- » On-demand video application

COMPELLENT'S FIRST CUSTOMER, STILL GROWING STRONG

When the team at The OSU's Fisher College of Business purchased Compellent SAN number one, scalability was a key driver in the decision process. Since that time, advanced technologies and tools have continued to make storage expandability and flexibility must-haves in the college's IT department. Despite the nearly five years since installation, Compellent's scalability shows no sign of stopping.

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One key to the college's scalability is Compellent's Dynamic Capacity™, which allows the IT staff to quickly create any size volume and only consume disk space when data is actually written. That difference has made over-purchasing and overprovisioning disk space a problem of the past at Fisher, adding up to a savings of nearly \$30,000 in server-attached storage since the SAN was installed. Increased disk utilization has also enabled Fisher to reduce costs associated with powering and cooling excess disk space, a concern that has become increasingly important for many organizations as energy prices climb.

ADVANCED MANAGEMENT FEATURES INCREASE SAVINGS AND SERVICE LEVELS

The college stores years of research, student files and e-mails, most of which are accessed infrequently. Before installing Compellent, IT staff members relied on a tedious manual classification process to identify the school's least-active data. Since adding Compellent's Data Progression™, Fisher has been able to automatically track data usage and migrate 40 percent of data to energy-efficient and economical SATA drives.

By automating time-consuming, repetitive storage monitoring tasks like information life-cycle management and capacity planning, the college spends less time on storage management, despite continued capacity growth. Time saved on storage administration frees the IT staff to work on more valuable projects, like long-term infrastructure strategy, improving end-user services or adding new technologies.

For faculty, staff and students heavily invested in coursework and research, data security and availability are critical issues. The college now relies on Compellent Replays (snapshots) to provide a more robust and rapid recovery solution than tape. Replays provide continuous data protection and can recover to any point in time within minutes of a server failure or deleted file. Because Replays only store changed blocks of data, Fisher

can create and store an unlimited number of Replays without consuming excess storage capacity or impacting performance.

Moving forward, the college plans to use Replays to add another layer to its disaster recovery strategy. Fisher plans to purchase a second SAN and replicate Replays from the original site to a remote location. The space-efficient Replays make replication more feasible than traditional solutions by allowing wizard-based setup, cost-effective IP-based replication and verification within minutes.

VIRTUAL STORAGE PREPS COLLEGE FOR REAL BENEFITS

Looking to the future, the college plans to push its IT infrastructure to become more virtual—a move that the Compellent SAN is prepared to compliment. Virtualization will help make the most of Fisher's current resources, shrink the college's data center footprint and boost its disaster recovery strategy, all without a forklift upgrade. Virtualization will also reduce expansion costs from generators, power infrastructure, cooling and facility limitations.

Compellent's unique ability to virtualize at the block level will enable Fisher's IT staff to provision from a virtual pool of storage without restrictions and create storage for hundreds of virtual servers quickly with no wasted storage capacity. This advanced storage virtualization will help faculty and staff access their data faster by spreading operations across all disk drives in the SAN, making it possible to process multiple data requests at the same time. With a virtual infrastructure in place, Fisher administrators will have the ability to boot virtual servers from the Compellent SAN, recover locally with Replays and replicate virtual servers for disaster recovery.

"When we started looking at Compellent five years ago, virtualization wasn't really on our radar screen," said Wilson. "As we continue to grow in new directions, adding higher levels of business continuity, for example, Compellent's keeping pace right alongside us."